

## **OVERVIEW**

**Federal Agency Name:** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Water,  
Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water

**Funding Opportunity Title:** Cooperative Agreement for Integrating Clean Water,  
Drinking Water and Land Use Planning Efforts

**Announcement Type:** Request for Applications

**Funding Opportunity Number:** EPA-OW-OGWDW-06-02

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number:** 66.424, 66.436

**Due Date:** The closing date for electronic receipt of applications through Grants.gov is  
August 28, 2006 11:59 PM EDT. The closing date for receipt of hard  
copy applications is August 28, 2006 4:00 PM EDT.

## **Section I. Funding Opportunity Description**

### **A. Background**

Under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) and Clean Water Act (CWA), activities to protect sources of drinking water are a core component and driver of an integrated, multiple barrier watershed approach to ensure safe and clean water. The 1996 Amendments to the SDWA included provisions for source water assessment and protection. As of November 2005, source water assessments are complete for community water systems nationwide. The challenge now is to use the information made available by the assessments to focus protection efforts at the local level on the greatest threats to sources of drinking water.

Source water protection relies on many of the tools used for watershed protection, land use planning, conservation and stewardship. There are efforts at the state and local level focused on watershed protection, using many of the CWA tools. Land use planning, conservation and stewardship are also state and local tools. The goal of the award expected to be made under this announcement is to demonstrate how the integration of these various tools can achieve common goals, ultimately leading to improved implementation of source water protection and water quality. There is a need to demonstrate how more systematic program integration at the state and local/watershed level can result in a more efficient inclusion of source water protection in water program priorities.

EPA anticipates awarding one cooperative agreement under this announcement for an expected total amount of \$600,000. The cooperative agreement is anticipated to be funded at approximately \$230,000 for the first year with a maximum award of \$600,000 total over a four year project period, depending on Agency funding levels and other applicable considerations. Applications submitted must address ways to demonstrate methods of integrating drinking water protection into land stewardship/conservation and water quality programs at the local and watershed level.

### **B. Statutory Authority**

A cooperative agreement will be awarded under the “research, technical assistance, information, and training of personnel” elements of SDWA Section 1442(c)(3) and CWA

Section 104(b)(3). These SDWA and CWA sections authorize EPA to make grants to any organization to (respectively): 1) develop and expand the capability of programs of States and municipalities to carry out the purpose of SDWA 1442 subchapter (c); and 2) conduct and promote the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of pollution.

### **C. Project Description**

This funding opportunity seeks proposed projects demonstrating how states can integrate source water protection with land stewardship/conservation and water quality programs at the local level. In the first 18 months of the project, the successful applicant will identify and work with four to five demonstration states to foster integration of water quality management, drinking water protection and land use planning efforts at the state level that will ultimately lead to improved source water protection at the local and watershed level. It is expected in the out years of the project that the successful applicant will identify three to four additional demonstration states, address lessons learned at the demonstration states, and focus on transferring results to other states, communities and/or watersheds.

**Critical Project Elements:** Applicants must address how their proposed project will meet the following three critical project areas:

#### **1. Partnerships**

Because this announcement deals with the integration of many similar aspects of state and local land and water programs and tools, the ability of the applicant to form and maintain partnerships will be a key to the success of the project. Over the course of the project, the applicant will need to demonstrate the ability to involve or consult with experts and practitioners from the various fields of watershed protection, drinking water protection, land use/stewardship or other related areas as they are implemented in different state or local programs.

- The applicant must describe how it will achieve stakeholder participation through partnerships.
- The applicant must identify and solicit input from key national partners engaged in watershed protection, drinking water protection, land use/stewardship or other related areas to leverage resources (financial and other) to improve the project.

#### **2. Technical Approach**

During the first 18 months of the project, the applicant will need to be able to identify and work with four to five demonstration states to use CWA and SDWA tools, land use/stewardship tools, water quality programs, and other authorities to move toward the goal of improving the quality of source water. Examples of clean water programs to integrate might include water quality standards, drinking water as a designated use, nonpoint source, wetlands protection and restoration, and stormwater. Other examples include using land conservation for drinking water source protection, or

land use tools such as conservation planning or special district overlays to protect ground water in karst terrain.

- The applicant must develop a strategic approach for identifying and working with demonstration states and successfully implementing opportunities for program integration.
- The applicant must assist in identifying key technical experts in each demonstration state to help review current programs and initiatives, including but not limited to state source water, clean water and natural resource and land use programs in the context of identifying opportunities for improved program integration. Other technical experts would likely include key water suppliers within the state.
- The applicant must assist in a results-oriented program review within the demonstration states, designed to identify opportunities for increased program integration to protect sources of drinking water and watersheds. Readily available data (i.e., CWA section 319/nonpoint source state watershed plans and local source water assessments) will be considered. The applicant will identify opportunities for new funding tools, administrative, legislative, or other changes that would improve integration of key programs and lead to more successful implementation of source water and watershed protection at the local level.
- The applicant will guide the development of a written plan that addresses specific opportunities identified in each demonstration state that are high-priority and achievable. The plan should also address longer-term action items, including an approach to providing assistance for local source water protection efforts on a sustainable basis. The plan will address issues such as funding, program criteria and goals, collaboration between departments and local incentives and technical assistance.
- The applicant will assist demonstration states in implementing short-term actions, and in setting in place a process for implementing the longer-term action items.

### 3. Lessons Learned and Transferring Results

Two of the challenges of demonstration projects involve synthesizing the experiences of unique situations in the demonstration projects into generalized lessons learned, and also to help transfer the lessons learned to other states, communities and/or watersheds.

- As a result of the demonstration projects, the applicant must identify recommendations for overcoming issues, barriers and/or challenges aimed at improving integration of programs at the state and local/watershed level. These lessons learned will be generalized from the site-specific in order to make them relevant to as broad an audience as possible.
- The applicant will create opportunities for sharing best state practices and lessons learned among other states, communities and/or watersheds and other stakeholders. This could be in the form of meetings, web casts, or other mechanisms.

For project planning and budgeting purposes, the applicant should assume that the four to five demonstration states would be well into implementation during the second year. Additional funding of approximately \$125,000 in years two, three and four would go toward a combination of a total three to four additional demonstration states, addressing lessons learned at the demonstration states, and increased emphasis on transferring results.

#### **D. Anticipated Environmental Results**

The activities to be funded under this announcement are consistent with EPA's Strategic Plan, Goal 2 (Clean and Safe Water), Objective 2.1 Protect Human Health, which calls for "Protect[ing] Human Health by reducing exposure to contaminants in drinking water (including protecting source waters) in fish and shellfish, and in recreational waters. This announcement supports EPA's focus on protecting sources of drinking water from contamination under one of the four key elements of this objective:

EPA will support protection of drinking water sources through training and technical assistance to states and communities that are taking voluntary measures to prevent or reduce contamination of source water. The Agency will foster coordination of contamination prevention strategies across jurisdictions, and will also work with states and tribes to use Clean Water Act authorities to prevent contamination of waters that serve as public water supplies and are at high risk. (EPA's Strategic Plan, available at <http://www.epa.gov/ocfocpage/plan/plan.htm>)

The activities to be funded under this announcement also are consistent with EPA's Strategic Plan, Goal 2 (Clean and Safe Water), Objective 2.2 Improving Water Quality on a Watershed Basis, which calls for "Protect[ing] and improv[ing] water quality on a watershed basis. This announcement supports EPA's work with states, interstate agencies, tribes and others under one of the six key areas identified under this objective: strengthen the water quality of rivers, lakes and streams on a watershed basis and protect[ing] coastal and ocean waters.

*Outputs:* Anticipated outputs (deliverables) from the award expected to be made under this announcement include:

- Identification of best state practices, including state laws/regulations/policies, funding and existing Geographic Information System (GIS) databases that are or could be integrated into land conservation and land use management, clean water and source protection program plans and activities.
- Identification of specific opportunities within the demonstration states to improve program integration among source water protection, comprehensive watershed planning and other CWA goals, including both short-term and longer-term strategies.
- A plan for each demonstration state that identifies short and long-term opportunities to integrate clean water management, source water protection, land conservation, land use management, and best practices and strategies.

- Recommendations for overcoming issues, barriers and/or challenges aimed at improving integration of programs at the state, local, and watershed level.
- Opportunities for sharing the demonstration project results among other states and stakeholders.
- Prepare quarterly reports and a detailed final report. The final report should include: summary of the project, achieved results, and costs of the project. In addition, the final report shall discuss challenges, successes, and lessons learned that could help overcome structural, organizational or technical obstacles to implementing a similar project.

*Outcomes:* Anticipated outcomes (long term benefits) from the award expected to be made under this announcement include:

- An established network of a wide variety of stakeholders who are protecting watersheds and source water. The network will facilitate information exchange, and enhance source water protection, watershed protection. This will ultimately result in improved water quality and public health protection.
- Increased knowledge of strategies to integrate many existing tools of clean water, drinking water and land use management programs.

## **Section II. Award Information**

EPA anticipates awarding one cooperative agreement under this announcement for an expected total amount of \$600,000. The cooperative agreement is anticipated to be funded at approximately \$230,000 for the first year with a maximum award of \$600,000 total over a four year project period, depending on Agency funding levels and other applicable considerations. The successful applicant must provide EPA with a negotiated, four-year work plan covering four distinct one-year periods of performance. For additional detail on work plan requirements see Section IV.C. (Content of Application - Statement of Work).

EPA reserves the right to partially fund applications by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund an application, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the application, or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and that maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process. EPA reserves the right not to make any awards under this announcement.

Cooperative agreements permit substantial involvement between the EPA Project Officer and the selected applicants in the performance of the work supported. Although EPA will negotiate precise terms and conditions relating to substantial involvement as part of the award process, the anticipated substantial Federal involvement for this project may include:

1. Participation in steering committee with representatives from within the Office of Water (i.e., the Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water and the Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds) as invited;
2. Close monitoring of the successful applicant's performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant;
3. Collaboration during performance of the scope of work;
4. In accordance with 40 CFR 31.36(g), review of proposed procurements.
5. Review qualifications of key personnel (EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the award recipient); and
6. Review and comment on tasks/deliverables (i.e., addressing lessons learned in subsequent years) and reports prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient).

### **Section III. Eligibility Information**

#### **A. Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants include States, territories, Indian Tribes, and possessions of the U.S., including the District of Columbia, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public or private nonprofit institutions and individuals. Nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply.

#### **B. Cost Sharing or Matching**

There are no cost-sharing or matching requirements.

#### **C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria**

These are requirements that, if not met by the time of application submission, will result in elimination of the application from consideration for funding. Only applications that meet all of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking factors in Section V of this announcement. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. Applications must substantially comply with the submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or else they will be rejected. In addition, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the application and/or parts of the application, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed. If a single spaced application is submitted, it will only be reviewed up to the equivalent of the 17 page double spaced page limit for applications specified in Section IV; excess pages will not be reviewed.

2. All proposals must address the three critical elements described in Section I.C. Project Description of this announcement.
3. Applications must be received by EPA or through Grants.gov on or before the solicitation closing date published in Section IV.D. of this announcement. Applications received after the published closing date will be returned to the sender without further consideration.
4. Hard copy applications must be submitted by hand-delivery, overnight delivery or courier service. Applications submitted by any type of U.S. Postal Service mail or by fax will not be considered for award.
5. The applicant must be eligible for award consideration at the time the application is submitted.

## **Section IV. Application and Submission Information**

### **A. Address to Request Application Packages**

Grant application forms are available at <http://www.epa.gov/gad/AppKit/index.htm> and by mail upon request by calling the Grants Administration Division at (202) 564-5320.

### **B. Form of Application Submission**

The applicant has the option to submit their application in *one* of two ways: 1) Submitting the application electronically through the Grants.gov website; **or** 2) Submitting the application to the EPA contact identified in Section VII in hard copy via courier, hand delivery, or express delivery service.

#### **1. Grants.gov Submission**

If you wish to apply electronically via Grants.gov, an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance must make the electronic submission of your application. For more information, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Get Started,” and then “For AORS” (Authorized Organization Representative) on the left side of the page. *Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to complete.* If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an AOR and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

At <http://www.grants.gov>, you will find step-by-step instructions that will help you to apply under this announcement.

To begin the application process for this announcement, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Apply for Grants” tab at the top of the page. Then click on “Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Application Instructions” to download the PureEdge viewer and obtain the application package ([https://apply.grants.gov/forms\\_apps\\_idx.html](https://apply.grants.gov/forms_apps_idx.html)). You may retrieve the application

package and instructions by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, **EPA-OW-OGWDW-06-02**, in the space provided. You may also be able to access the application package by clicking on the button “How To Apply” at the top right of the synopsis page for this announcement on <http://www.grants.gov> (to find the synopsis page go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Find Grant Opportunities” button on the top of the page and then to go EPA opportunities).

Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically.

**How to submit your application through Grants.gov:**

Applicants are required to submit the following documents to apply electronically through Grants.gov. All documents should appear in the “Mandatory Documents” box on the Grants.gov Grant Application Package page.

- For the Application Narrative portion of the application, you will need to attach electronic files. Prepare your narrative as described in Section IV.C of the announcement and save the document to your computer as an MS Word or PDF file. When you are ready to attach your application narrative to the application package, click on “Project Narrative Attachment Form,” and open the form. Click “Add Mandatory Project Narrative File,” and then attach your application narrative (previously saved to your computer) using the browse window that appears. You may then click “View Mandatory Project Narrative File” to view it. Enter a brief descriptive title of your project in the space beside “Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename,” the filename should be no more than 40 characters long. If there other attachments that you would like to submit to accompany your application, you may click “add Optional Project Narrative File” and proceed as before. When you have finished attaching the necessary documents, click “Close Form.” When you return to the “Grant Application Package” page, select the “Project Narrative Attachment Form” and click “Move Form to Submission List.” The form should now appear in the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”
- The following 6 additional documents should appear in the “Mandatory Documents” box on the Grants.gov Grant Application Package page.
  1. SF 424 – Application for Federal Assistance
  2. SF 424A – Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs
  3. SF 424B, Assurances for Non-Construction Programs
  4. Grants.gov Lobbying Form – Certification Regarding Lobbying
  5. EPA Form 5700-54 Key Contacts
  6. EPA Form 4700-4 Pre-award Compliance Review Report

For each document, click on the appropriate form and then click “Open Form” below the box. The fields that must be completed will be highlighted in yellow. Optional fields and completed fields will be displayed in white. If you enter an invalid response or incomplete information in a field, you will receive an error message. When you have finished filling out each form, click “Save.” When you return to the electronic Grant



Application Package page, click on the form you just completed, and then click on the box that says, “Move Form to Submission List.” This action moves the document over to the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

- The following three documents are listed in the “Optional Documents” box, but *please note that these so-called “optional documents must also be submitted as part of the application package, if applicable to your organization:*
  7. SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
  8. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
  9. Biographical Sketches for Project Manager(s)

You are only required to submit SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities if your organization is involved in lobbying activities. You are required to submit the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement if you have included any indirect costs in your proposed budget. You must submit Biographical Sketches for Project Manager(s) by using the “Other Attachments Form” in the “Optional Documents” box. After attaching the documents, please remember to highlight the “Other Attachments Form” and click “Move Form to Submission List” in order to move the documents to the box that say, “Optional Completed Documents for Submission.”

Once you have finished filling out all of the forms/attachments and they appear in one of the “Completed Documents for Submission” boxes, click the “Save” button that appears at the top of the Web page. It is suggested that you save the document a second time, using a different name, since this will make it easier to submit an amended package later if necessary.

Please use the following format when saving your file: “Applicant Name – FY06 – Source Water – 1<sup>st</sup> Submission” or “Applicant Name –FY06 Source Water – back-up Submission.” If it becomes necessary to submit an amended package at a later date, then the name of the 2<sup>nd</sup> submission should be changed to “Applicant Name –FY06 Source Water – 2nd Submission.” Once your application package has been completed and saved, send it to your AOR for submission to U.S. EPA through Grants.gov. Please advise your AOR to close all other software programs before attempting to submit the application package through Grants.gov.

In the “Application Filing Name” box, your AOR should enter your organization’s name (abbreviated where possible), the fiscal year (e.g., FY06), and the grant category (e.g., Source Water). The filing name should not exceed 40 characters. From the “Grant Application Package” page, your AOR may submit the application package by clicking the “Submit” button that appears at the top of the page. The AOR will then be asked to verify the agency and funding opportunity number for which the application package is being submitted. If problems are encountered during the submission process, the AOR should reboot his/her computer before trying to submit the application package again. [It may be necessary to turn off the computer (not just restart it) before attempting to submit the package again.] If the AOR continues to experience submission problems, he/she may contact Grants.gov for assistance by phone at 1-800-518-4726 or email at

support@grants.gov or contact Debra Gutenson at 1-202-564-3882 or email at gutenson.debra@epa.gov.

If you have any other technical difficulties while applying electronically, please refer to <http://www.grants.gov/CustomerSupport>.

## **2. Submission to EPA Contact By Hard Copy**

For applicants that choose not to submit applications via Grants.gov, applications (prepared as described below in paragraph C) can be submitted to the EPA contact (see Section VII) by hard copy. All hard copy submissions should be submitted double-sided and must be accompanied by an electronic copy on digital media, for example a CD-ROM or a 3.5" disk, IBM compatible and readable in PDF or MS Word with the narrative application consolidated into a single file. In addition, four extra copies of the entire application package must be submitted in hard copy.

Applications submitted to the EPA contact (see Section VII) by hard copy will be considered if received by EPA through courier, hand-delivered, or by express delivery service by the time and date specified below in Section IV.D. Applications will **not** be accepted if delivered by U.S. Mail as they are subject to security screenings (including potential irradiation) that may delay the delivery process and/or negatively impact application package contents. Applications must be **received by the EPA contact by the time and date specified below in Section IV. D.**, regardless of the hard copy delivery method. EPA will **not** accept faxed submissions

## **C. Content of Application Submission**

All application packages, regardless of how submitted, must include the following documents:

1. Application Narrative prepared as described below (No more than **17 double spaced pages – a page is one side of a piece of paper.**)
2. Standard Form 424 – Application for Federal Assistance
3. SF-424A – Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs
4. SF 424B, Assurances for Non-Construction Programs
5. Grants.gov Lobbying Form – Certification Regarding Lobbying
6. EPA Form 5700-54 Key Contacts
7. EPA Form 4700-4 Pre-award Compliance Review Report
8. SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
9. Other Attachments (Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable; Biographical Sketches for the Project Manager(s))

Application narratives must be typewritten and double-spaced and should be legible and easily readable. Pages should be numbered for ease of reading. Hard copy submissions may be submitted double-sided.

### **Application Narrative Contents**

Application narratives **must** include the information listed below. If a particular item is not applicable, clearly state this in the application.

1. Cover Page including:
  - Project Title
  - Name of Applicant
  - All Project Contacts
  - E-mail Address and Phone Number
  - Total project cost and dollars requested
2. Executive Summary (not to exceed 2 pages): The executive summary should be a stand-alone document, not to exceed 2 pages. The summary should provide highlights of project organization and administration, and include a brief description of proposed program implementation methodologies, with an overview of major project goals, and methods of measuring and assessing progress. The summary should include the amount of funding requested from EPA, and the project period.
3. Detailed Budget Description:
  - Personnel – List all staff positions by title. Give annual salary, percentage of time assigned to the project, and total cost for the budget period.
  - Fringe Benefits - Identify the percentage used, the basis for its computation, and the types of benefits included.
  - Travel – Specify the mileage, per diem, estimated number of trips in-state and out-of-state and other costs for each type of travel.
  - Equipment – Identify each item to be purchased which has an estimated acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit and a useful life of more than one year. Items with a unit cost of less than \$5,000 are deemed to be supplies, pursuant to 40 CFR 31.3 and 30.2.
  - Supplies – “Supplies” means all tangible personal property other than “equipment.” The budget detail should identify categories of supplies to be procured (e.g., laboratory supplies or office supplies).
  - Contractual – Identify each proposed contract and specify its purpose and estimated cost.
  - Other – List each item in sufficient detail for EPA to determine the reasonableness and allowability of its costs.
  - Indirect Charges – If indirect charges are budgeted, indicate the approved rate and base.
4. Project Narrative containing information on how the proposed project will address:
  - a. Partnerships: Describe stakeholder participation through partnerships.
    - The applicant must describe how they will achieve stakeholder participation through partnerships.
    - The applicant must demonstrate how they will identify and solicit input from key national partners engaged in watershed protection, drinking water protection, land use/stewardship or other related areas to leverage resources (financial and other) to improve the project. Any support letters from potential partners should specifically indicate how the partnering organization would assist the project. (not counted in page limit)

- b. Technical Approach: The applicant must discuss:
- The proposed strategic approach for identifying and working with four to five demonstration states in the first 18 months and then identifying and working with three to four additional demonstration states in the out years of the project period,
  - The key technical experts that will be needed to help review current programs and initiatives,
  - How the results-oriented program review, designed to identify opportunities for increased program integration to protect sources of drinking water, will be implemented,
  - The elements to be included in a written plan for each demonstration state that describes specific program integration opportunities, both short-term and long-term, and
  - An approach for implementing short- and long-term program integration opportunities.
- c. Lessons Learned and Transferring Results: The applicant must address:
- How they will identify recommendations for overcoming issues, barriers and/or challenges aimed at improving integration of programs at the state and local/watershed level. These lessons learned will be generalized from the site-specific in order to make them relevant to as broad an audience as possible.
  - How they will create opportunities for sharing best state practices and lessons learned among other states and stakeholders. This could be in the form of meetings, web casts, or other mechanisms.
- d. Four Year Milestone Schedule: The application must include a milestone schedule that covers four years and provides:
- A breakout of the project into phases with associated tasks.
  - Time frames for completion of each task and phase.
  - A descriptive list of deliverables, including ongoing and/or repeated tasks and deliverables.
  - A plan for preparing quarterly reports and a detailed final report. The final report should include: summary of project, achieved results, and costs of the project. In addition, the final report should discuss challenges, successes, and lessons learned that could help overcome structural, organizational or technical obstacles in implementing a similar project.
- e. Environmental Results Past Performance: Submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5, and preferably EPA agreements), and describe how you documented and/or reported on whether you were making progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outputs and outcomes) under those agreements. If you were not making progress, please indicate whether, and how, you documented why not. In evaluating applicants under this factor in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and

from current and prior Federal agency grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available environmental results past performance information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for this factor under Section V.

- f. Programmatic Capability: Submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5, and preferably EPA agreements), and describe (i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements and (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including submitting acceptable final technical reports. In evaluating applicants under this factor in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current and prior Federal agency grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these factors in Section V.

In addition, provide information on your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objective of the proposed project, and your staff expertise/qualification, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

- g. Tracking Progress Toward Achieving Environmental Results: Describe the planned strategy for measuring and tracking progress toward achieving the expected environmental outputs and outcomes identified in Section 1 of this announcement. Provide a clear description of the project's anticipated environmental outputs and outcomes. The applicant is expected to discuss interim outputs, including deliverables, as well as likely long-term outcomes. See Section I.D. for the discussion of anticipated environmental results from this announcement.
- h. Specialized Experience: Describe prior experiences in working on human health and environmental issues, particularly in relation to implementing the Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act. Include a description of experience related to:
- Drinking water programs, ground and surface water quality, wetlands, and/or wastewater management, demonstrating familiarity with the requirements of the CWA and/or the SDWA.
  - Sustaining communication among diverse stakeholders and facilitating decision-making and collaboration among competing interests.

The applicant should also provide, to the extent not otherwise covered above, any information necessary to address the factors in Section V.

#### **D. Submission Dates and Times**

Hard copy submissions must be received no later than 4:00 PM EDT Time on August 28, 2006. Electronic applications must be transferred to <http://www.grants.gov> no later than 11:59 PM EDT on August 28, 2006. Applications submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

#### **E. Intergovernmental Review**

The funds associated with the announcement require Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, review. E.O. 12372 structures the federal government's system of consultation with states and local on its decisions involving grants, other forms of financial assistance, and direct development. Under E.O. 12372, states, in consultation with their local governments, design their own review process and select the federal financial assistance and direct development activities they wish to review. If selected for funding, the recipient of the federal assistance agreement will be required to send a copy of their application to the appropriate State Clearinghouse Office for an intergovernmental review, if applicable. (See: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>)

#### **F. Funding Restrictions**

In accordance with EPA guidance and the OMB Circulars, as appropriate, the recipient must agree that it will not use assistance funds for lobbying, fund-raising or political activities (e.g., lobbying members of Congress, or lobbying for other federal grants, cooperative agreements or contracts). Construction is not an allowable activity, foreign travel is not permissible, and equipment purchases require written permission by the EPA project officer if they were not included in the approved application. The terms and conditions of the formal assistance agreement may put additional and specific limitations on the funding.

#### **G. Confidential Business Information**

In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their application as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark applications or portions of applications they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure.

#### **H. Other Submission Requirements**

All applicants are required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering (DUNS) number when applying for federal grants or cooperative agreements. Organizations can receive a DUNS number when applying for federal grants or cooperative agreements. Organizations can receive a DUNS number in one day, at no

cost, by calling the dedicated toll free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or by visiting the web site at [www.dnb.com](http://www.dnb.com).

## Section V. Application Review Information

### A. Selection Criteria

EPA will first review applications to determine if they satisfy the threshold criteria described in Section III of this announcement. Applications that meet all of the threshold eligibility factors will then be evaluated and ranked based on how well they address the criteria detailed below. (Maximum points for each element are indicated.)

EVALUATION CRITERIA	Weight (100 point scale)
<b>CRITERION ONE: Partnerships</b>	<b>20 points</b>
Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>10 points</b> - Describes how it will achieve stakeholder participation through partnerships</li> <li>• <b>10 points</b> – Clearly describes how it will identify and solicit input from key national partners engaged in watershed protection, drinking water protection, land use/stewardship or other related areas to leverage resources (financial and other) to improve the project.</li> </ul>	
<b>CRITERION TWO: Technical Approach to Project</b>	<b>25 points</b>
Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5 points</b> – Explains the proposed strategic approach for identifying and working with demonstration states,</li> <li>• <b>5 points</b> – Identifies the types of key technical experts that will be needed to help review current programs and initiatives,</li> <li>• <b>5 points</b> – Describes how the results-oriented program review, designed to identify opportunities for increased program integration to protect sources of drinking water, will be implemented,</li> <li>• <b>5 points</b> – Identifies elements to be included in a written plan for each demonstration state that describes specific program integration opportunities, both short-term and long-term, and</li> <li>• <b>5 points</b> – Describes an approach for implementing short- and long-term program integration opportunities.</li> </ul>	

<b>CRITERION THREE: Lessons Learned and Transferring Results</b>	<b>10 points</b>
<p>Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5 points</b> – Describes how it will identify recommendations for overcoming issues, barriers and/or challenges aimed at improving integration of programs at the state and local/watershed level; making sure they are relevant to as broad an audience as possible</li> <li>• <b>5 points</b> – Describes how it will create opportunities for sharing best state practices and lessons learned among other states and stakeholders</li> </ul>	
<b>CRITERION FOUR: Milestone Schedule</b>	<b>5 points</b>
<p>Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant clearly articulates a milestone schedule with tasks, timeframes for each task, deliverables and reporting schedule.</p>	
<b>CRITERION FIVE: Programmatic Capability/Environmental Results Past Performance</b>	<b>17 points</b>
<p><u>Programmatic Capability:</u> Applications will be evaluated based on the applicant's ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>3 points</b> (i)–Past performance in successfully completing federally funded assistance agreements similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last three years;</li> <li>• <b>3 points</b> (ii)–History of meeting reporting requirements under federally funded assistance agreements similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last three years and submitting acceptable final technical reports under those agreements</li> <li>• <b>3 points</b> (iii)–Organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project</li> <li>• <b>3 points</b> (iv)–Staff experience/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them to successfully achieve the goals of the project.</li> </ul> <p>Note: In evaluating applicants under this criterion, the Agency will consider the information provided by the applicant, and may also consider relevant information from other sources including Agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided the by applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance or reporting history (items (i) and (ii) above), will receive a neutral score for these factors.</p>	



<p><u><b>Environmental Results Past Performance Criterion (5 points):</b></u> Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which they documented and/or reported on their progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under Federally funded agency assistance agreements performed within the last three years, and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not. Note: In evaluating applicants under this factor, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance reporting history will receive a neutral score on this factor.</p>	
<b>CRITERION SIX: Environmental Results</b>	<b>10 points</b>
<p>Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant clearly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5 points</b> - Demonstrates an ability to identify and articulate anticipated environmental outputs and outcomes, and to move a project expeditiously and successfully toward long-term results (See Section I.D.)</li> <li>• <b>5 points</b> - Articulates a plan to track and measure progress toward achieving the expected outcomes and outcomes identified in Section I of this announcement and in the submitted Statement of Work.</li> </ul>	
<b>CRITERION SEVEN: Specialized Experience</b>	<b>13 points</b>
<p>Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>7 points</b> - Demonstrates knowledge and experience in working on human health and environmental issues related to drinking water programs, ground and surface water quality, wetlands and/or wastewater management. Familiarity with the requirements of the SDWA and/or the CWA.</li> <li>• <b>6 points</b> –Describes an approach to sustain communication among diverse stakeholders and facilitate decision-making and collaboration among competing interests.</li> </ul>	

## **B. Review and Selection Process**

Each eligible application will be evaluated and ranked by a panel comprised of EPA staff. The review panel will base its evaluation on the selection criteria described in Section

V.A. The review panel will provide its evaluations and rankings to the Director of the Drinking Water Protection Division who will make the final selection decisions. In making the final section decision, the Director will consider the review panel evaluations and rankings and may take into account programmatic priorities and project diversity.

### **C. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates**

Following final selection, all applicants will be notified in writing by e-mail regarding their application's status. The notification that advises that the applicant's application has been selected and is being recommended for award is not an authorization to begin performance. The award notice signed by the EPA award official is the authorizing document, and will be provided through postal mail. At a minimum, this process can take 90 days from the date of selection notification.

## **Section VI. Award Administration Information**

### **A. Award Notices**

The Director, Drinking Water Protection Division within the Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water will make final selection of the award recipient. The Agency reserves the right to reject all applications and make no award under this announcement.

### **B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

The general award and administration process for assistance agreements are governed by regulations at 40 CFR Part 30 (Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations) and 40 CFR Part 31 (States, Tribes, interstate agencies, intertribal consortia and local governments). A description of the Agency's substantial involvement in the cooperative agreement will be included in the final agreement.

### **C. Reporting**

In general, recipients are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations and activities supported by the assistance funding, to assure compliance with applicable Federal requirements, and for ensuring that established milestones and performance goals are being achieved. Performance reports and financial reports must be submitted quarterly and are due 30 days after the reporting period. The final report is due 90 days after the assistance agreement has expired. Recipients will be required to report direct and indirect environmental results from the work accomplished through the award. In negotiating this cooperative agreement EPA will work closely with the recipient to incorporate appropriate performance measures and reporting requirements in the work plan consistent with 40 CFR 30.51, and 31.40.

### **D. Dispute Procedures**

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/05-1371.htm> . Copies of the dispute procedures may also be requested by contacting Debra Gutenson at (202) 564-3882.

### **E. Administrative Capability Review**

Nonprofit applicants that are recommended for funding will be subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews consistent with Sections 8.b, 8.c, and 9.d of EPA Order 5700.8 which is available on the internet at [http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700\\_8.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700_8.pdf).

### **Section VII. Agency Contact**

For further information regarding this announcement, contact:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water  
East Building, Room 2140C  
1201 Constitution Ave, NW  
Washington DC 20004  
Attn: Debra Gutenson  
Phone Number: (202) 564-3882  
E-mail: [gutenson.debra@epa.gov](mailto:gutenson.debra@epa.gov)

In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft applications, provide informal comments on draft applications, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their applications. However, EPA will respond to questions in writing from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the application, and requests for clarification about the announcement. EPA will accept questions via e-mail until two weeks prior to application deadline and will respond to applicants within three business days.

### **Section VIII. Other Information**

The EPA Grant Award Officer is the only official who can bind the Agency to the expenditure of funds for selected projects resulting from this announcement.